

THE FAYETTE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION held a **Public Meeting/Workshop** on March 3, 2011, at 7:00 P.M. in the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue West, Board of Commissioners Conference Room, Suite 100, Fayetteville, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Thoms, Chairman
Al Gilbert, Vice-Chairman
Bill Beckwith
Jim Graw
Douglas Powell

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Pete Frisina, Division Director of Community Development
Tom Williams, Assistant Director of Planning & Zoning
Dennis Dutton, Zoning Administrator
Robyn S. Wilson, P.C. Secretary/Zoning Coordinator

GUEST: Bo Mullins

Welcome and Call to Order:

Chairman Thoms called the Public Meeting/Workshop to order and introduced the Board Members and Staff.

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1. Consideration of the Minutes of the Public Meeting held February 17, 2011.

Chairman Thoms asked the Board Members if they had any comments or changes to the Minutes.

Al Gilbert made the motion to approve the Minutes. Doug Powell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-1 with Bill Beckwith abstaining from the vote.

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2. Discussion of proposed amendments to the Fayette County Code of Ordinance, Chapter 20. Zoning Ordinance.

Beekeeping

Pete Frisina advised he had addressed the BOC to discuss beekeeping and presented copies of a letter from Mr. Michael Maxwell. He said beekeeping is becoming popular. He pointed out since

beekeeping is regulated under the Georgia Department of Agriculture, staff concluded beekeeping is in a class of uses that are agricultural in nature and would be allowed in A-R. He explained two (2) situations where beekeeping has been brought to the attention of staff and both have been related to complaints in residential subdivisions. He stated that the BOC had suggested working with local beekeepers in setting the number of beehives based on the size of the lot and distinguishing hobby vs. commercial beekeeping.

The PC discussed the practicability of allowing honeybees as a hobby in one (1), two (2), and five (5) acre residential zoning districts.

Bo Mullins said he would like reasonable zoning requirements that allow one (1) or two (2) beehives in a residential zoning district which would ensure the bee population is not reduced or diminished out of simple fear and ignorance. He said it was of the utmost importance for beehives to be managed on-premise. He remarked that bees will swarm if the beehive is not properly managed. He said bees are attracted to chlorinated water. He commented bees provide necessary pollination for our food supply, including most of our local fruit and vegetable crops each year. He remarked bees are necessary for agriculture which, in his case, is his back yard garden. He discussed the importance of the queen bee and her role within the beehive. He mentioned he had attended classes by Reynolds Nature Reserve, "*Beekeeper's Short Course*." He pointed out the training covered all aspects of beekeeping and honey handling and production.

Jim Graw asked if he was keeping bees as a hobby or commercially.

Bo Mullins replied he was keeping bees as a hobby. He added he owned slightly more than a one (1) acre lot.

Jim Graw suggested considering permitting beekeeping as a hobby with strict rules and limiting the number of hives to no more than two (2) in all residential zoning districts, except A-R. He added commercial beekeeping is a different situation which would require a different and strict set of rules.

Doug Powell suggested instead of prohibiting bees, problem hives should be dealt with like any other nuisance.

Chairman Thoms suggested having a bee expert come to the next public meeting. He added the county agent may be a possible source of information.

Pete Frisina advised staff would continue to research the issue and prepare proposed regulations.

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Animals

Pete Frisina advised he had addressed the BOC to discuss the number of dogs and cats (animals) kept on a residential or nonresidential lot. He pointed out the regulations for a “kennel” is somewhat of a “backdoor” approach to regulating the number of animals. He noted since the number of animals is addressed through zoning, the only situation where a resident could have more than three (3) animals would be for their property to be zoned A-R and meet the 300 foot setback requirements. He stated that the BOC had suggested: 1) that commercial kennels should be regulated under Zoning, as it was “far-fetched” to require a single-family dwelling to be a kennel; 2) the language concerning noncommercial kennels should be removed with animals regulated under a dog and/or cat ordinance; and 3) regulating pets on a nuisance basis instead of a numerical basis. He commented staff would prepare two (2) ordinances for review with one relating to the number under zoning and one under the County Code of Ordinances addressing nuisance, noise, and care of animals and premises. He presented a ledger from various jurisdictions indicating limitations from three (3) animals to no limitations.

Al Gilbert reminded the PC that previously Animal Control had discussed the “pack mentality” when you have over three (3) dogs.

Doug Powell commented one (1) animal could be a problem while four (4) or more animals, in many circumstances, particularly if they were kept inside, would be just fine.

Jim Graw remarked the maximum number of animals was established because it was enforceable. He added if the number was deleted, enforcement would then be as a “nuisance,” which would be more difficult to administer and enforce unless the county has the proper measuring tools and established guidelines.

Pete Frisina explained that under the current ordinance, if an individual had four (4) house cats, the individual would be in violation of the ordinance.

Robyn Wilson advised the PC that several years ago, a lady brought her children and four (4) dogs to the BOC Public Hearing and asked the BOC to pick out which dog she had to get rid of.

Pete Frisina advised staff could continue to research other regulations and prepare the proposed amendments.

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PC Workshop

3. Discussion of the required Full Plan Update of the Fayette County Comprehensive Plan.

Pete Frisina explained the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, as administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, require periodic updates of the Comprehensive Plan; however, Commissioner Mike Beatty has, as of today, deferred the Comprehensive Plan updates which were due to be adopted by June 30, 2012. He said the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) recognizes the reduced revenues of the local governments. He commented the DCA will be working with the ACCG, GMA, and ARC to review and make permanent revisions to the comprehensive planning rules and regulations.

Pete Frisina advised that the area around the hospital needs to be addressed on the Land Use Plan based on a joint effort with the City of Fayetteville to create a mixed use development as a job center with surrounding housing and limited commercial to serve the development. The area would need to be annexed for the provision of sewer. Part of the development would be geared toward age restricted housing as well. The PC discussed the feasibility of more intensive land use in the vicinity of the hospital.

Chairman Thoms asked about the intersection of SR 74 South and SR 85 South being another area of concentration.

Pete Frisina replied he wanted to wait for the completion of the highway construction, but the area needs to be addressed.

Chairman Thoms stated it is important to communicate with and involve the public, as much as possible, in the land use plan update process and coordinate transportation plan changes, particularly those in the recently updated Transportation Plan, with future land use planning.

Pete Frisina advised staff will begin reviewing the comp plan but he did not anticipate any big changes need to be made. He also stated stats within the plan will be updated with the release of the 2010 Census data.

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Chairman Thoms asked if there was any further business. He advised he would not be present at the March 17th Public Meeting/Workshop.

Pete Frisina advised he would not be at the March 17th Public Meeting/Workshop; however, there would be a discussion held regarding the parking of recreational vehicles in the right-of-way as the

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P&Z Department had received a complaint.

Hearing no further business, Bill Beckwith made a motion to adjourn the Public Meeting/Workshop. Al Gilbert seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed 5-0. The Public Meeting/Workshop adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

**PLANNING COMMISSION
OF
FAYETTE COUNTY**

ATTEST:

**TIM THOMS
CHAIRMAN**

**ROBYN S. WILSON
P.C. SECRETARY**

(Note: FTR Gold did not record the audio or log notes. These Workshop Minutes were prepared from input from staff and the PC.)